

MINUTES OF THE CITY COUNCIL

CITY OF AUSTIN, TEXAS

Special Meeting

May 15, 1967
10:00 A.M.

Council Chamber, City Hall

The meeting was called to order with Mayor Palmer presiding.

Roll Call:

Present: Councilmen LaRue, Long, Shanks, White, Mayor Palmer
Absent: None

Present also: W. T. Williams, Jr., City Manager; Doren R. Eskew, City Attorney; Reuben Rountree, Jr., Director of Public Works; Robert A. Miles, Chief of Police

MAYOR PALMER announced this was a Special called meeting of the City Council for the purpose of the completion of unfinished business and for the Inauguration and Organization of the 1967-1969 Council.

Invocation was delivered by DR. JOHN BARCLAY, Central Christian Church.

HONORABLE HOMER THORNBERRY, Judge of the United States Court of Appeals, Fifth Circuit, expressed gratitude in behalf of his family, himself, and his neighbors, for Mayor Palmer, Councilmen Shanks and White, who had rendered sacrificial and unselfish service to the City of Austin. It had not been easy. Judge Thornberry wanted them to know as they went about their tasks and duties that the citizens of Austin, neighbors, and friends are forever grateful to them. To the incoming Council Members, he said "Welcome to a difficult and challenging job", and recalled that 21 years ago he was elected to this City Council. He pointed out the new members come on the Council with everybody's congratulations and applause, and he warned that those who will be first to say they were responsible for their election, will be anxious for the Council to do as they say; others will continue to object; others will want to persuade the members to do something they should not; but he asked that the Council remember that there are many, many others who never telephone to object, but have faith in the Council to do what it thinks is best for all the people of Austin.

COUNCILMAN WHITE said he had enjoyed the 16 years he had served and although occasionally the members had their ups and downs, but what they came up with was for the good of Austin; and when the Council adjourned all were friends. It had been a great pleasure for him to serve with these four Councilmen the last two years, as well as those with whom he had served in the past.

COUNCILMAN LaRUE stated there was one modest Councilman, who said over and over again he was perfectly willing to carry water for the rest of the Council. A man who is willing to do this and still gets his name on legislation that had been passed in these Halls for 16 years is a modest man. Councilman LaRue presented Councilman White with a "water bucket".

COUNCILMAN LaRUE said he had the opportunity for the past four days to express his appreciation both as a citizen and as a member of the City Council to the outgoing Council Members, the "Dynamic Trio"; and had attended the memorable occasion in honor of those three. To the outsiders who make it their business to determine where they will invest their money and where they will live, he referred to three perfect examples, one being cited in the 1965 U.S. News and World Report that Austin was one of the top 14 cities in the United States in which one would like to live and rear their children. This was determined after much deliberation. More recently, the I.B.M. Factory moved to Austin without any solicitation, although the City would have sought them had the opportunity presented itself, but the I.B.M. completely hid their identity and had chosen the City of Austin before anyone knew about it. This speaks very highly of this out going group. In the newspaper of May 14, there was another article about a retiring Colonel who traveled over the face of the earth for some 24 years looking over many places for a permanent home. In light of this search, he picked Austin in which to live, and is contacting his friends throughout the rest of the world and indicates that some have already said they are moving to the City of Austin also. This Colonel said one could not measure a City such as Austin without having looked at many other cities. This speaks more eloquently than anything that could be said today of the contribution that these individuals have made to the City of Austin--some 34 years of service. It would be necessary to go back to the forefathers and the founders of the City of Austin to find anything to equal the 34 years that these individuals have contributed to the City of Austin.

COUNCILMAN LONG stated all would agree that Austin has three great men that have served the City of Austin a long time, doing a good job, and that Austin loves them. A person who spends 12 years on the City Council cannot help but have a feeling that the City is closer to him than to anyone else. A person who has spent 16 years on the City Council feels that his roots are so deep that he can hardly stay away from the City Hall, and the Council expects Mr. Ben and the Mayor both to be back up here quite often and hopes they will. Mr. Shanks has been here six years, and his roots were not quite as deep as the 16 years and 12 years; but when he makes roots, he makes them! Mr. Shanks will be back visiting and helping. Councilman Long stated she had the privilege of serving on the Council for 14 years, having had the distinguished honor and privilege of taking the seat that Judge Thornberry vacated and she had occupied that seat ever since. She stated she had strived hard to do as good a job and make as good a Council Member as Judge Thornberry had done. She had worked with Mayor Palmer, Councilmen Shanks and White, and they are dedicated people who certainly will be missed by her and everyone, and she invited them back to advise and give constructive criticism. Councilman Long thanked the "First Lady of Austin, "MRS. LESTER PALMER" for doing a wonderful job and expressed appreciation to the other wives of the Councilmen who had made a great sacrifice.

COUNCILMAN SHANKS wished the new Council the best of luck. He pointed out this was the only Council Austin has and each and everyone must help when possible and work and pray for them, and it is the duty of each and everyone to get behind the Council, the only one the City has. He wished all the best of luck and expressed his love for each and everyone.

MAYOR PALMER said there were so many people and so much to be thankful for. He said he doubted if any group of people had been more sincere, or more dedicated or had worked any harder in trying to make Austin the kind of a City that it is destined to become. He thanked the voters that permitted him to serve and this Council who permitted him to be the Mayor for the last four years. He thanked his wife, ETHEL, stating through the years as dignataries visited Austin, she had tried desperately hard to create a real friendly image for Austin. Austin is known as the "Friendly City" and he hoped no matter how large it became, it would never lose that name. The status of Austin as the Capital City of this great State has required very close work with the Travis County Delegation, SENATOR CHARLES HERRING, Representatives WILSON FOREMAN, DON CAVNESS, BOB ARMSTRONG and PAT CAIN. Mayor Palmer publicly thanked this group for the cooperative spirit they had shown on problems that affect the City directly relating to the State and to the University. He stated in view of the many programs developing to make cities of greater beauty, of greater opportunity and greater economic vitality, it had been necessary to work on a Federal level, and he announced that CONGRESSMAN JAKE PICKLE had been most cooperative and helpful in pushing these programs through that were desperately needed in Austin. Mayor Palmer recalled visits with JUDGE THORNBERRY while he was U. S. Congressman, while they were working on the Federal Post Office, Federal Building and Internal Revenue Center, and expressed deep gratitude to him for all of his help he gave in this regard. Mayor Palmer pointed out the endowments of Austin which few cities enjoy--an assured water supply beyond 2000; beautiful hills and prairies and farm lands merging; and its ideal site as "the seat of an empire" as visioned by the Commissioners appointed to locate the site of the Capitol. Austin will become the hub of a terrific metropolitan area stretching all the way from San Antonio to Waco. It has been indicated there will be 22 metropolitan areas in Texas; and within this area, there will be over 4,000,000 by 2000. He analyzed this projection in stating it would equal 11 cities the size of Houston; 15 the size of Dallas; 35 the size of El Paso and 40 the size of Austin, every year for the next 32 years. This gives an idea of what the problems will be affecting local communities and local government; and it is a terrific challenge to this new Council, and they will do a fine job in looking after Austin.

MAYOR PALMER stated 12 years ago he had the privilege of voting for a City Manager and they voted as a Council to make W. T. WILLIAMS, JR., the permanent City Manager. It is the City Manager and the city employees who carry out their duty that make the Council look good in many respects. To Mr. Williams and all of his City employees, Mayor Palmer expressed his sincere thanks for the wonderful cooperative spirit; and many nights they had sat up here into the early morning hours working on budget matters, bond matters, fiscal policies, and the City Manager and the Department Heads were willing to stay with the Council until they came up with a solution. Austin has the ingredients to make it a great City. It's a good city today, and it will be a better City tomorrow. He was grateful to the people of Austin in permitting him to serve for the time he had.

Councilman Shanks moved that the Council adjourn. The motion, seconded Councilman White, carried by the following vote:

Ayes: Councilmen LaRue, Long, Shanks, White, Mayor Palmer
Noes: None

May 15, 1967

Roll call was held for the Councilmen Elect.

Present: Councilmen Elect Akin , Janes, LaRue, Long, Nichols
Absent: None

Councilman Long moved that MR. R. E. JANES, JR. be chosen as Temporary Chairman of this meeting. The motion, seconded by Councilman Elect Nichols, carried by the following vote:

Ayes: Councilmen Elect Akin , Janes, LaRue, Long, Nichols
Noes: None

COUNCILMAN ELECT R. E. JANES, JR. stated if this Council projected the trail that its predecessor blazed, it will have a tremendous job cut out for it, and he believed this Council would strive mightily to do that.

HONORABLE ROBERT W. CALVERT, Chief Justice, Supreme Court of Texas, administered the oath of Office to MR. HARRY AKIN, MR. RALPH JANES, JR., MR. TRAVIS LaRUE, MRS. EMMA LONG AND MR. DICK NICHOLS, as follows:

THE STATE OF TEXAS {

COUNTY OF TRAVIS {

I, do solemnly swear that I will faithfully execute the duties of the office of Councilman of the City of Austin, of the State of Texas, and will to the best of my ability preserve, protect and defend the Constitution and laws of the United States and of this State; and I furthermore solemnly swear that I have not directly nor indirectly paid, offered, or promised to pay, contributed, nor promised to contribute, any money, or valuable thing, or promised any public office or employment, as a reward for the giving or withholding a vote at the election at which I was elected. So help me God.

s/ Emma Long
Mrs. Emma Long, Councilman Place 1

s/ Dick Nichols
Dick Nichols, Councilman Place 2

s/ Ralph Janes, Jr.
Ralph Janes, Jr., Councilman Place 3

s/ Harry Akin
Harry Akin, Councilman Place 4

s/ Travis LaRue
Travis LaRue, Councilman Place 5

SWORN TO before me by Mrs. Emma Long, Dick Nichols, Ralph Janes, Jr., Harry Akin, and Travis LaRue, on this the 15th day of May, 1967, A.D.

s/ Robert W. Calvert
Robert W. Calvert, Chief Justice
Supreme Court of Texas

(Seal Supreme Court of the State
of Texas)

Chairman Janes asked for nomination and election of Mayor.

Councilman LaRue nominated MR. HARRY AKIN as Mayor of the City of Austin. The nomination was seconded by Councilman Long. Roll call showed the following vote:

Ayes: Councilmen Akin, Janes, LaRue, Long, Nichols

Noes: None

Chairman Janes announced that MR. HARRY AKIN had been elected Mayor of the City and MAYOR AKIN took the Chair and presided.

MAYOR AKIN, addressing the dignitaries present, the out-going Council Members, and citizens of Austin, said he could not really express to his fellow Councilmen the honor they had bestowed upon him and he definitely would try to live up to the responsibility. On behalf of the fellow Council Members, he expressed appreciation for the presence of the large number of citizens, as such a manifestation of interest in the affairs of City Government is encouraging. He hoped this interest would continue, for the degree of progress achieved in the community in the future is directly dependent upon the willingness of the citizens to involve themselves in the matters of public interest. Also on behalf of the Council, he expressed appreciation to members of the out-going Council as well as to all of the other Council Members who preceded them. He said the Council joined with all other citizens of Austin in expressing gratitude to Mayor Palmer, Councilmen Shanks and White for the dedicated service to this City and the incumbents consider themselves fortunate in the continuity and experience afforded them by the continuing service of Councilmen Long and LaRue. Each is impressed with the gravity of responsibility assumed today. Recognizing they might not always be right in their judgments, he pledged that it would always be their guiding principle to seek those avenues best calculated to serve the interest of all the people of this City in the light of all available facts. The most difficult task a human being could undertake, in his opinion, was to think objectively. If one subscribes to the theory that one is a product that everything one has done, every place one had been, that each is descended from ancestors, and minds are parts of one's body, it should be clear that unbiased thinking is well nigh an impossibility. He assured that the new Council will make a strenuous effort in this direction.

Mayor Akin said it was not inconsistent with their pride in their City, and its justly deserved nation-wide reputation, to recognize there is room for improvement, and that there always will be. It should be conceded that real progress depends upon acceptance of the principle of the inevitability of change. Changing times and conditions require new approaches to meet these changes. Toward this end no established policy, practice, or institution could go beyond the realm of question or re-evaluation. Those things that pass the test of scrutiny will stand vindicated and sanctified. Those things which do not survive such testing are obviously in need of replacing.

Mayor Akin, on behalf of his fellow Council Members, appealed to the Citizens of Austin for close collaboration in establishing goals to guide their joint efforts for making Austin a still greater City. This the Council needs from the Citizens; their viewpoints, and their continuing help. He hoped that the Council might be as objective as possible in its decisions, ever under conditions of great pressure or emotional attitudes which are bound to develop in the future. With the help of the citizens, he repeated that great things could be accomplished for this great community.

Mayor Akin called for nominations for the Mayor Pro Tem. Councilman Janes nominated Councilman Long as Mayor Pro Tem. The nomination was seconded by Councilman Nichols. Roll call showed the following vote:

Ayes: Councilmen Janes, LaRue, Long, Nichols, Mayor Akin
Noes: None

MAYOR PRO TEM LONG thanked the Council for this great honor; and greeted all of the people who had come to see their Council inaugurated. She noted a wonderful cross section; Bergstrom Field representation, the Chamber of Commerce, State Officials, Judge Homer Thornberry; and people from all cross sections of Austin. It is an indication that people of Austin do think of their City, and she stated it was too bad there was not a larger City Hall so that more people could be here. She recognized members of her family who were present, MR. STUART LONG, her younger son, JEFF; MR. AND MRS. LEONARD HICKS, her sister and brother-in-law; and her very dear friend, MRS. JEAN LEE. Councilman Long said she would continue to do as she had been doing, and represent Austin in the best fashion she could. She thanked the Council for making her Mayor Pro Tem.

COUNCILMAN DICK NICHOLS introduced his wife, Mary; his daughter Anna Belle; daughter-in-law Becky; daughter Mary Sue and his son-in-law James. Councilman Nichols expressed awareness of the responsibility that this Council has; of the tasks that lie ahead; and with the help of God, he felt that this Council could demonstrate it believes Austin is one of the greatest Cities in the World in which one can reside.

COUNCILMAN RALPH JANES recognized Mr. Noble Prentice, a member of his business family and his family who had traveled from West Lake Hills to Austin; and his greatest asset, his wife Hilda. As he stated previously, he said again, the Council had a tremendous job in following the trail the predecessors blazed, and that the Council would strive mightily to do it; and he was confident that they would present the face of unanimity in the future that they have this morning.

MAYOR AKIN presented his Mother-in-law, Dr. Josephine Dunlop; his brother and his wife, Mr. and Mrs. Ray Akin; his sisters, Mrs. Edwina Stewart and Mrs. Edna Ramsey from Corpus Christi; his nephews Johnnie and Carol Akin; and Harry Akin who is an associate in business with him. He recognized the gentleman who started him in business with the first equipment he ever purchased, MR. O. W. ALMY who drove up from San Antonio today.

MAYOR AKIN stated this Council wanted all to feel at home in the Council Chamber and always make their viewpoints known or expressed.

MAYOR PRO TEM LONG expressed appreciation to REVEREND BARCLAY for bringing the invocation, and JUDGE CALVERT for administering the Oath of Office, and the Press.

There being no further business, Councilman Long moved that the Council adjourn. The motion, seconded by Councilman Nichols, carried by the following vote:

Ayes: Councilmen Janes, LaRue, Long, Nichols, Mayor Akin
Noes: None

APPROVED

Harry Akin
Mayor

ATTEST:

Grace Monroe
Asst. City Clerk